

## Iraq Reconstruction: Contributing to Security

As Iraqis and their Coalition partners work to secure Iraq, thousands of reconstruction projects are under way, providing another critical contribution to Iraq's long-term success.

As of mid-September, more than 2,800 of more than 3,800 projects planned under the Iraq Reconstruction Program had been completed. Work has started on another 600.

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. William H. McCoy Jr., the Army Corps of Engineers commander in Iraq, said "incredible headway" is being made in Iraq and Baghdad.

- **The projects are visible elements of Iraq's growth and progress.**
- **The projects are linked to the prosperity Iraqis envision for themselves and to the stability they deserve.**
- **The projects give insight and balance to assessing conditions in Iraq, helping show Americans how Coalition troops are making a difference in the lives of Iraqis every day.**

Links: Sept. 14, 2006 [transcript](#) of briefing in Iraq by Maj. Gen. McCoy and Maj. Gen. Caldwell; AFPS [story](#); MNF-Iraq [story](#).



Gulf Region South District inspectors are briefed on construction progress by an Iraqi site engineer at the Al Baneer Substation in the Ad Diwaniyah Province. GRS has 59 similar projects across Iraq, which will improve the country's electrical distribution infrastructure.

## Quality of Life Projects Making a Difference in Iraq

The goal of Coalition reconstruction efforts is to restore essential services and help the Iraqi people meet their basic needs without having to rely on outside assistance.

One priority of the government in Iraq is building an Iraqi health-care system based on primary care and outpatient clinics. All contracts for the 142 primary health-care clinics in the country have been awarded.

Of the clinics, three are operational, three are scheduled to open shortly, and the rest are

expected to be completed between December 2006 and February 2007.

The clinics adhere to the same basic design: six examination rooms, a pharmacy, two dental examination rooms and X-ray facilities. Each clinic is expected to serve between 40,000 and 100,000 patients a year.

Once completed, the clinics will relieve the overburdened outpatient care currently being provided by older hospitals, and help to reduce infant mortality.

In other projects around Iraq, the Gulf Region Division of the Army Corps of Engineers Facilities and Transportation Sector has completed: 834 out of 847 planned schools, 20 out of 32 planned hospitals, 11 out of 17 planned airports, 86 out of 99 planned railroad stations, and 31 out of 34 planned postal facilities.

Links: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division [web site](#); Army Corps of Engineers [story](#).



Tamather al-Janabi, director of the al-Bashair Center for Micro-Finance, and U.S. Army Col. Todd Ebel cut a ribbon at the opening of the center on Sept. 2. (DoD photo by Army Spc. George Welcome.)

## Helping Iraqis Help Themselves

A new micro-finance center in Baghdad Province is providing small loans to local residents to help them start their own businesses.

It is another example of how Coalition forces continue to work to empower Iraqis in the economic restoration of their country.

Soldiers from Multi-National Division-Baghdad joined Iraqi staff on Sept. 2 at the grand opening of the al-Bashair Center for Micro-Finance in Radwiniyah.

The program teaches Iraqis how to start small businesses. Loans range from \$200 to \$3,000. The center is funded by the U.S. Agency for

International Development.

The project began with a vision almost a year ago, said U.S. Army Col. Todd Ebel, commander 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division. The colonel said when he arrived in Iraq, he saw resources were focused on large cities, but many citizens in southern Baghdad are farmers and small business owners.

**"I really do believe that if this works, it will help provide opportunities for the average Iraqi citizen," Ebel said.**

Link: MNF-Iraq [story](#).